

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An interactive digital video service network, comprising:

means for providing a digital signal, the digital signal having information reflective of at least one regular program and at least one Background Commercial;

an end user, the end user having a receiver for receiving the digital signal and a presentation unit for displaying at least a portion of the digital signal;

a channel communicating the digital signal from the means for providing a digital signal to the receiver;

selection means for allowing the end user to select between the at least one regular program and the at least one Background Commercial for display on the presentation unit; and

a return channel communicating Background Commercial Viewing Data from the receiver to a digital service operator.

2. The interactive network of Claim 1, wherein the information reflective of the at least one Background Commercial contains Audio-Visual Information and/or Banner Information, the Banner Information being presented to the presentation unit with the at least one regular program.
3. The interactive network of Claim 1, further comprising a control switch whereby the user can filter the Background Commercial portion of the digital signal from being delivered to the presentation unit.

4. The interactive network of Claim 1, further comprising a means for communicating the Background Commercial Viewing Data over the return channel from the receiver to the service operator, and means for updating a Background Commercial Viewing Record with the Background Commercial Viewing Data communicated from the receiver to the digital service operator.

5. An interactive digital video service network, comprising:

means for providing a digital signal, the digital signal having information reflective of at least one regular program and at least one Background Commercial, wherein the information reflective of the at least one Background Commercial contains Banner Information;

an end user, the end user having a receiver for receiving the digital signal and a presentation unit for displaying at least a portion of the digital signal, the Banner Information being presented to the presentation unit with the at least one regular program; and

a channel communicating the digital signal from the means for providing a digital signal to the receiver.

6. The interactive network of Claim 5, further comprising selection means for allowing the end user to select between the at least one regular program and the at least one Background Commercial for display on the presentation unit.
7. The interactive network of Claim 5, further comprising a return channel for communicating Background Commercial Viewing Data from the receiver to a digital service operator.
8. The interactive network of Claim 5, wherein the information reflective of the at least one Background Commercial contains Audio-Visual Information and/or Banner Information, the

Banner Information being presented to the presentation unit with the at least one regular program.

9. The interactive network of Claim 5, further comprising a control switch whereby the user can filter the Background Commercial portion of the digital signal from being delivered to the presentation unit.

10. The interactive network of Claim 5, further comprising a means for communicating the Background Commercial Viewing Data over the return channel from the receiver to the service operator, and means for updating a Background Commercial Viewing Record with the Background Commercial Viewing Data communicated from the receiver to the digital service operator.

11. A method of providing digital programming to viewers, the method comprising the steps of:

creating a combined digital television signal which combines information reflective of regular programming and Background Commercials, the information reflective of the Background Commercials containing Audio-Visual Information and/or Banner Information;

transmitting the combined digital television signal over a channel to end users;

receiving the combined digital television signal at a receiver;

selecting a selected portion of the combined digital signal from the information reflective of the regular programming and the Background Commercials for display at a presentation unit; and

displaying the selected portion of the combined digital signal on the presentation unit.

12. The method of Claim 11, further comprising the steps of creating Background Commercial Viewing Data, communicating the Background Commercial Viewing Data from the receiver to the service operator, and updating a Background Commercial Viewing Record with the Background Commercial Viewing Data communicated from the receiver to the service operator.

13. The method of Claim 12, further comprising the steps of determining an economic benefit based upon the updated a Background Commercial Viewing Record and providing that economic benefit to the end user.

14. The method of Claim 11, further comprising the step of presenting Banner Information with the selected portion of the combined digital signal for display on the presentation unit.

15. A receiver for an interactive digital video service network, the receiver comprising:

means for receiving a digital signal, the digital signal having information reflective of a regular program and at least one Background Commercial, wherein the information reflective of the at least one Background Commercial contains Banner Information;

means for decoding the digital signal and providing a first signal reflective of the regular program and a second signal reflective of the at least one Background Commercial;

means for receiving the signal reflective of the at least one Background Commercial and providing a signal reflective of the Banner Information; and

means for providing a video output signal, the means for providing the video output signal combining information from the signal reflective of the regular program and the signal reflective of the Banner Information.

16. The receiver of Claim 15, further comprising a User Interface means for obtaining User commands to enable or disable the inclusion of Banner Information in the video output signal and a control unit for providing control signals reflective of the User commands.

17. The receiver of Claim 15, further comprising a storage means for storing Background Commercial view data and a transmission means for providing a return signal reflective of the Background Commercial view data.

18. A receiver for an interactive digital video service network, the receiver comprising:

means for receiving a digital signal, the digital signal having information reflective of a regular program and at least one Background Commercial, wherein the information reflective of the at least one Background Commercial contains Audio-Visual Information and Banner Information;

means for decoding the digital signal and providing a first signal reflective of the regular program and a second signal reflective of the at least one Background Commercial;

means for receiving the second signal reflective of the at least one Background Commercial and providing a first BC signal reflective of the Banner Information related to one of the at least one Background Commercials and a second BC signal reflective of Audio-Visual Information related to the one of the at least one Background Commercials; and

means for providing a video output signal, the means for providing the video output signal combining information from one of (i) the signal reflective of the regular program or (ii) the second BC signal, with information from the signal reflective of the Banner Information.

19. The receiver of Claim 18, wherein the means for receiving the signal reflective of the at least one Background Commercial provides a third BC signal reflective of information identifying

the one of the at least one Background Commercials

20. The receiver of Claim 18, further comprising a selection means for allowing an end user to select between information from the signal reflective of the regular program and information from the second BC signal for inclusion in the video output signal.
21. The receiver of Claim 18, further comprising a User Interface means for obtaining User commands to enable or disable the inclusion of Banner Information and/or the second BC signal in the video output signal and a control unit for providing control signals reflective of the User commands.
22. The receiver of Claim 18, further comprising a storage means for storing Background Commercial view data and a transmission means for providing a return signal reflective of the Background Commercial view data.
23. The receiver of Claim 18, further comprising a storage means for storing information from the second BC signal, and means for replaying the second BC signal stored in the storage means to the means for providing a video output signal for inclusion in the video output signal.
24. The receiver of Claim 18, further comprising a storage means for storing information from the second BC signal and means for replaying the second BC signal stored in the storage means to the means for providing a video output signal for inclusion in the video output signal, wherein there is information reflective of a plurality of Background Commercials within the digital signal, the second BC signal stored in the storage means is related to the plurality of the Background Commercials, and the means for replaying provides one or several of the stored plurality of Background Commercials for inclusion in the video output.
25. The receiver of Claim 18, further comprising a storage means for storing information from

the signal reflective of the regular program, and means for replaying the signal reflective of the regular program stored in the storage means to the means for providing a video output signal for inclusion in the video output signal.

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